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THESIS

**BOLIVIA'S "LEFT TURN" TOWARD RENTIER
PLURINATIONALISM AND ITS EFFECTS ON ETHNIC
TENSIONS AND SOLIDARITY**

by

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June 2016

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ITS EFFECTS ON ETHNIC TENSIONS AND SOLIDARITY**

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the establishment of plurinationalism in Bolivia and its relationship with a rentier economy based in extractive energy resources. In the early 2000s, Bolivia became part of a Leftist shift in governments across South America. With the election of Bolivia's first indigenous president, Evo Morales, Bolivia cast aside neo-liberal economic policies and nationalized many of its industries, the largest being the hydrocarbon and oil industry. Utilizing strong cultural and historical symbols, Morales gained overwhelming support from the mestizo and indigenous communities. The promise of self-determination and autonomy for self-identifying indigenous groups propelled Bolivian plurinationalism forward as the answer for change in a government that finally represented the traditionally repressed majority. Energy rents supported universal pensions, education, and maternal-infant health care; these programs became the primary tools for populist-style redistribution. This thesis analyzes the effectiveness of these social programs in establishing national cohesion and identity among the Bolivian population. A historical comparison of Bolivia before plurinationalism, announced in 2005, and during the establishment of plurinationalism, 2005–2013, is utilized to gauge the effectiveness of the new government policy in creating national cohesion. The primary finding of this thesis is that the effective impact of social programs on national cohesion is minimal. Instead of greater Bolivian national cohesion, the primary outcome of these programs is the reinforcement of the social divide between the Morales government supporters in the western highlands and autonomy seeking groups in the eastern lowlands.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CCT	conditional cash transfer
COB	Bolivian Workers Central / <i>Central Obrera Boliviana</i>
FDI	foreign direct investment
FSTMB	Union Federation of Bolivian Mine Workers / <i>Federacion Sindical de Trabajadores Mineros</i>
GDP	gross domestic product
GPI	gender parity index
ILO	International Labor Organization
LAPOP	Latin American Public Opinion Project
MAS	Movement Toward Socialism / <i>Movimiento al Socialismo</i>
MNR	Revolutionary Nationalist Movement / <i>Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario</i>
ODA	official development assistance
PAHO	Pan-American Health Organization
PASB	Pan-American Sanitary Bureau
PELA	Parliamentary Elites in Latin America
POR	Revolutionary Workers' Party / <i>Partido Obrero Revolucionario</i>
RADEPA	Reason for Homeland / <i>Razon de Patria</i>
TCO	Communal Lands of Origin / <i>Tierras Comunitarias de Origen</i>
TNC	transnational corporations
UDP	Democratic Popular Unity / <i>Unidad Democratica y Popular</i>
UK	United Kingdom
U.N.	United Nations
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
USA	United States of America
US\$	United States dollars

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I. INTRODUCTION

The 2005 election of Evo Morales solidified a political and social transition in Bolivia, the Andes region, and South America. Bolivia's "radical Left Turn," a turn taken also in Ecuador, Venezuela, and Argentina, is defined as "the wholesale reversal of trade liberalization and privatization."¹ Anti-colonial attitudes and indigenous movements enabled this turn.² In making the Left Turn in these countries, "The state expanded its control over the economy, and the presidents maximized their control over the state."³

As part of this Left Turn, Bolivian President Morales introduced the policy of plurinational governance, based on "robust redistributive social rights rooted in a strong state alongside equally robust indigenous rights."⁴ Energy sector rents, under this policy, are to finance both a strong state and autonomous indigenous rights in Bolivia in order to diffuse conflicts between the two. Plurinationalism rests on the central government's elevation of and respect for the multiple indigenous communities that exist in Bolivia, while at the same time forging – out of diverse populations and geographic regions – a consolidated Bolivian nation.

Indigeneity is central to Morales' policy and base of support. On the thirteenth of September 2007, the 107th plenary meeting of the United Nations' General Assembly adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The declaration and its 41 Articles, "[affirmed] that indigenous peoples are equal to all other peoples, while recognizing the right of all peoples to be different, to consider themselves different, and to be respected as such."⁵ Indigenous rights finally became an international institution.

¹ Sebastian L. Mazzuca, "The Rise of Rentier Populism," *Journal of Democracy* 24, no.2 (2013): 108.

² Miguel Centellas, "Cycles of Reform: Placing Evo Morales's Bolivia in Context," *Latin American Research Review* 50, no. 1 (2015): 229.

³ *Ibid.*, 109.

⁴ Bret Gustafson, "Manipulating Cartographies: Plurinationalism, Autonomy, and Indigenous Resurgence in Bolivia," *Anthropological Quarterly* 82, no. 4 (2009): 991.

⁵ United Nations, *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, 2007 (New York: United Nations, 2008), 1.

The first country to approve the U.N. declaration was Bolivia. Evo Morales, an Aymara and the first Bolivian president of indigenous background, stated:

We are the first country to turn this declaration into a law and that is important, brothers and sisters. We recognize and salute the work of our representatives. But if we are to remember the indigenous fight clearly, many of us who are sensitive would end up crying in remembering the discrimination, the scorn.⁶

Article 6 of the declaration states that, “Every indigenous individual has the right to a nationality.”⁷ This thesis will address this individual right of nationality through a case study of Bolivia and the country’s use of hydrocarbon energy rents to support social programs.

The driving research question for this thesis is whether redistribution of wealth from the Bolivian energy sector to society is creating national solidarity among Bolivia’s ethnic and indigenous populations, or is maintaining, escalating, or creating ethnic division. The thesis’ central hypothesis, enshrined in the rhetoric of Morales’ “plurinationalism,” is that these national social programs should increase feelings of national solidarity and identification with what Morales has declared to be The Plurinational State of Bolivia.

Non-homogenous countries rich in natural resources such as Bolivia often face instability associated with identity politics. Will Bolivia go the way of other extractive-resource-based nations, such as Nigeria? In Nigeria “the oil boom led to an ethnicization of politics and the manipulation of regional provinces – designed neither for freedom nor equality but to defuse challenges to the centralized regime.”⁸ Scholars find that, “in ethnically diverse societies, economic issues are almost always at the same time ethnic issues.”⁹ Bolivia too is facing rising tensions in the ethnic and political arenas. With respect to Bolivia, Bret Gustafson states that, “the question is whether plurinationalism

⁶ Headlines, “Bolivia Approves U.N. Declaration of Indigenous Rights,” Democracy Now!, accessed April 06, 2016, <http://www.democracynow.org/2007/11/9/headlines>.

⁷ United Nations, “UNDRIP,” 5.

⁸ Ibid., 1010.

⁹ Stuart Kaufman, “Ethnicity as a Generator of Conflict,” in *Routledge Handbook of Ethnic Conflict*, ed. Karl Cordell and Stefan Wolff (New York: Routledge, 2011), 95.

can reconcile both indigenous rights and strong state sovereignty, while avoiding new exclusions (and violence) associated with territorializing modes of ethno cultural differences and with hypernationalist states.”¹⁰

The analysis and empirical evidence of this thesis is presented in four chapters. Chapter I addresses the relationship between Bolivia and the myriad ethnic and indigenous identities of its population. The methods, hypothesis, and design of the research are presented in the first chapter. The contextual definitions of the terms ethnicity and indigenous will be explored at the end of the chapter.

Chapter II will discuss the historical background of Bolivian indigenous identity. This chapter will focus on the interaction between political power and social organization from the pre-European era until the modern era of the twenty-first century.

Chapter III analyzes the characteristics of Bolivian national identity. The Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) provides bi-annual data, starting in 1998 until 2014, on key elements that address national identity and cohesion: ethnic self-identification, indigenous association, trust in municipal and central governments, levels of victimization, and social mobilization, i.e., protests and public demonstrations. Secondary literature on Bolivian identification supports the analysis, as well.

Chapter IV will compare pre-2005 and 2005 - 2013 energy resource rent redistribution practices. Historically Bolivian social programs were paid from mining funds; in 2009, with the Bolivian Constitution referendum, funds for social programs were to be allocated exclusively from hydrocarbon and natural gas rents.

A. BOLIVIA’S LEFT TURN: NATIONALIZATION AND PLURINATIONALISM

President Morales, a popular figurehead who once led the *cocaleros* [coca leaf growers] workers’ movement, has profited greatly from indigenous social movements and anti-colonial attitudes toward transnational corporations operating in Bolivia. His passage of the Hydrocarbon Laws of 2005 marked a turning back of Bolivia’s energy

¹⁰ Gustafson, “Manipulating Cartographies,” 991–992.

sector toward nationalization. The Bolivian energy sector, “natural gas, in particular” has “become the backbone of the macroeconomy as well as a primary source of social conflict.”¹¹

The Morales policy of nationalized energy resources has “allowed the state to capture a larger share of the economic rents generated by extraction.”¹² The 2005 law reflects changing elite attitudes towards Foreign Direct Investment (FDI), which has increased over Morales’ time in office. In 2013, FDI accounted for 34 percent of Bolivia’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP).¹³ A 2013 total of \$1.3 billion dollars in FDI entered Bolivia in the energy sector for investment in hydrocarbons, mining (lithium deposits extraction development), industry, and electricity.¹⁴

“These revenues,” according to Pellegrini and Arismendi, “are financing numerous social policies that have been initiated or have expanded since 2006 and that are flagships for Morales’ political agenda.”¹⁵

Social programs supported by energy sector rent include “pensions and conditional cash transfers.”¹⁶ The *Renta Dignidad* [The Dignity Pension] is a pension program “financed by 27 percent approximately of the Direct Tax on Oil and Gas.”¹⁷ Scholars suggest that the redistributive programs are imbalanced and only partially regulated. Pellegrini and Arismendi note that, “Tarija, the department [province or regional administrative unit] that produces round 70 percent of the hydrocarbon, is also the one that benefits the most from redistribution.”¹⁸ Although extractive energy sector

¹¹ Denise Humphreys Bebbington and Anthony J. Bebbington, “Extraction, Territory, and Inequalities: Gas in the Bolivian Chaco,” *Canadian Journal of Development Studies* 30, no. 1–2 (2010): 260.

¹² Lorenzo Pellegrini and Marco Octavio Ribera Arismendi, “Consultation, Compensation, and Extraction in Bolivia after the ‘Left Turn’: The Case of Oil Exploration in the North of La Paz Department,” *Journal of Latin American Geography* 11, no. 2 (2010): 104.

¹³ U.S. Department of State, “2014 Investment Climate Statement-Bolivia,” (June 2014), <http://www.state.gov/e/eb/rls/othr/ics/2014/228433.htm>.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., 108.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid.

rents are benefiting the Bolivian state, local economies seem to be experiencing uneven and often negative environmental and socio-economic impacts. The U.S. State Department stated in 2014 that, “the missing redistribution of revenues and the lack of compensatory policies as the local level result[ed] in unfair outcomes.”¹⁹

Ethnic demographic division has been a prime mover in political group identification since pre-colonial times.

Bolivia’s indigenous demography and societal distinctions have been studied and analyzed by anthropologists and other social scientists for decades. These studies have organized the thirty Bolivian indigenous groups into regional and linguistic areas. Indigenous groups are also divided between the western Andean highlands (home to the Aymara and Quechua peoples) and southeastern lowland basin (home to the Guarani).²⁰

The nationalized hydrocarbon industry creates another geographic and physical rift through the country. Hydrocarbon and other resource extraction under state control have increased Bolivia’s GDP exponentially.²¹ The majority of the hydrocarbon fields are located in the south-east (Guarani) region of the country.²² This thesis draws on the work of Michael Ross and others to understand the impact of government redistribution on whether and how Bolivia’s energy sector may affect Bolivia’s current national cohesion.

B. POTENTIAL EXPLANATIONS AND HYPOTHESES

This thesis examines the effect of government redistribution programs on Bolivia’s national cohesion. The proposition examined here, and underpinning Morales’ platform of plurinationalism, is that energy-sector-funded government programs will decrease ethnic stratification in Bolivia and produce a cohesive “plurinational” nation-state with ethnic group autonomy. The causal logic of Morales’ policy is that government

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Gustafson, “Manipulating Cartographies,” 1006.

²¹ U.S. State Department, “2014 Investment Climate Statement-Bolivia,” <http://www.state.gov/e/eb/rls/othr/ics/2014/228433.htm>.

²² Denise Humphreys Bebbington, “Consultation, Compensation, and Conflict: Natural Gas Extraction in Weenhayek Territory, Bolivia,” *Journal of Latin American Geography* 11, no.2 (2012): 51.

resource-wealth distribution policy has direct effects in reducing ethnic division, increasing national cohesion, all the while maintaining ethnic group autonomy. The alternative outcomes are: these programs have no effect or they have a negative effect. Morales' ideology of plurinationalism is the primary alternative explanation for any resulting increase in national cohesion, equal representation and support.

C. RESEARCH DESIGN

The conduct of the thesis research focuses on a single longitudinal case study: the impact of Bolivian energy-rent policies on social/ethnic stratification before and during plurinationalism. The two timeframes of Bolivia allow for comparative analysis. The first period is the state of ethnic and social stratification prior to the 2005 establishment of plurinational governance. Understanding the historical context of Bolivian ethnic division provides a benchmark against which to identify post-2005 changes in national cohesion, the second period of inquiry. The research will assess whether the state distribution of nationalized energy-sector rents under plurinational governance were the catalysts that changed minority attitudes towards greater national cohesion.

The single case methodological approach is appropriate because it contains a controlled variable of the Bolivian energy sector and the observable relation it has with the multiple ethnic groups that compose Bolivia's population demography.

The analytical evidence is divided into two sets of indicators: the independent variable of government resource wealth policy and the dependent variable of national cohesion. Government resource wealth policy indicators include official declaratory statements regarding resource wealth distribution, official program budgetary data on resource wealth distribution, and non-official material on actual resource wealth distribution. The dependent variable indicators include secondary literature on Bolivian identification and public opinion surveys of self-identification as an ethnic group and/or Bolivian, familiarity with national languages vs. native languages, attitudes towards/tolerance of other non-native languages and groups, attitudes of pride towards family/region/country, attitudes towards the central government, and political party membership/association.

J.S. Mill's "most-similar system design" or "method of difference" is an applicable method of research and analysis.²³ John Gerring defines the method as analyzing, "few cases that are as similar as possible in all respects except the outcome of interest, where they are expected to vary."²⁴ The design is viable in comparison of cases separated by time and causal changes in political, economic, and social areas.²⁵ As noted earlier, Bolivia pre-2005 (starting in the 1930s when Bolivia began to export oil) and the Bolivia of 2005 to 2013 are the two cases analyzed through the most-similar method. The similarities of the two periods include the number of ethnic/indigenous groups, the presence of energy sector economy, and democratically elected government. National cohesion is the outcome in question.

The types of sources utilized for this research include both primary and secondary sources. The primary sources include Bolivian government documents and independent survey data. Government documents include the 2009 Bolivian Constitution and other policy doctrines pertaining to indigenous/ethnic rights and energy source control. These primary government sources provide the framework for how plurinationalism is defined in Bolivia and how redistribution of economic resources produced by the energy sector is implemented among the Bolivian population. Other primary sources include survey research on Bolivian mass attitudes from Latin American Barometer (LAPOP).

The secondary sources utilized for thesis research includes scholarly articles, books, and journals. A lack of Spanish, Quechua, and other languages utilized in Bolivia limited the research to secondary sources written, published, and/or translated into English. There is a vast amount of English-language research done on Bolivia, both social, political, and economic, making the lack of language skills not an insurmountable problem, including ethnographic studies of indigenous groups in Bolivia, especially the groups existing in energy rich regions, i.e., the South East Lowlands.

²³ John Gerring, *Social Science Methodology: A Criterial Framework* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 209.

²⁴ Ibid., 210.

²⁵ Ibid., 211–212.

Both the primary and secondary sources provided the best evidence for evaluating the causal argument. The government documents, survey research, objective ethnographic studies, and scholarly articles compose the majority of the research materials.

D. DEFINING ETHNICITY, INDIGENEITY, AND NATIONALISM

The elements of human identity exist on a spectrum ranging from the individual psychology of a person to the normative behaviors of international institutions. Ethnicity, indigeneity, and nationalism are identity constructs developed through group socialization and behaviors. Ted Lewellen states that, “ethnicity only exists in relationship to other groups; isolated people would certainly have culture, but would not have ethnicity.”²⁶ Ethnicity’s definition is variable and depends on the subjective view of those holding it. This thesis will utilize ethnicity as a factor to distinguish Bolivian groups’ cultural and physical attributes. This framework is based closely on Stanley Tambiah’s definition, where “ethnicity is a self-conscious and vocalized identity that substantializes and naturalizes one or more attributes...skin color, language, religion, and territory and attaches them to collectivities as their innate possession and myth-historical legacy.”²⁷

Indigeneity and being indigenous, like ethnicity, are social constructs. The term indigenous, however, ties directly to contemporary Western political and social contexts. Fabricant and Gustafson argue that indigeneity, “offers a cultural and knowledge-centered challenge to conventional Western paradigms through which state transformations are debated.”²⁸ Indigeneity is a term utilized in Bolivia for political mobilization in favor of large state institutional and structural changes. Indigenous labels given to organizations and political groups across Bolivia exist in the context of positive

²⁶ Ted C. Lewellen, *Political Anthropology: An Introduction*, 3rd ed. (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 2003), 166–167.

²⁷ Stanley Tambiah, “The Nation-State in Crisis and the Rise of Ethnonationalism,” in E.N. Wilmsen and P. McAllister, eds., *The Politics of Difference: Ethnic Premises in a World of Power* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 168.

²⁸ Nicole Fabricant and Bret Darin Gustafson, *Remapping Bolivia: Resources, Territory, and Indigeneity in a Plurinational State* (Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press, 2011), 5.

civil-society expansion but may exhibit “fundamentalism” or what Fabricant and Gustafson call “masking stasis with the rhetoric of change.”²⁹ Further analysis of Bolivian indigenous political movements will be addressed in chapters II and III.

Nationalism is very similar to the previous terms of ethnicity and indigeneity, in that it is also a social construct. Many assume that nationalism centers on the tangible elements of the state: marked physical territory and governed population within those geographic and politically recognized boundaries. This traditional sense of nationalism, which started with the French Revolution in the late eighteenth century, conjoins a “nation” with its “state.”³⁰ Bolivia’s current government policy of plurinationalism, however, is an example of how nationalism has evolved from the traditional “Enlightenment roots” toward a novel definition of “ethnonationalism.”³¹ This sets the stage for conflict between constituent elements of the “nation” and their “state.” This conceptual conflict exists in plurinationalism between its promulgation of the rightful autonomy of self-identified ethnic groups of Bolivia and the centralizing, national identity of what constitutes a person to be Bolivian. Bolivia under Morales and plurinationalism is attempting to use centralized control of the hydrocarbon energy sector to afford the opportunity for autonomous identification, while also creating a dependency on, and presumably loyalty to, the centralized government for social program support. This conceptual context is important for individual identity data in Bolivia. National identity and identification in this thesis will be indicated by how an individual or group views their level of involvement within and satisfaction with the process of plurinational governance.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Tambiah, “Rise of Ethnonationalism,” 124–27.

³¹ Lewellen, “Political Anthropology,” 171.

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II. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Understanding some key periods of Bolivian history is crucial to what identities look like in contemporary Bolivia and whether economic payouts or political ideologies have been more important to the creation of a cohesive national identity. The historical eras analyzed will focus on the interaction between the governing body that holds power over the populations and the processes that lead to the changes of ethnic identities in present-day Bolivia. The influences on Bolivian history are complex and diverse, ranging from Incan and Spanish imperialism to Bolivia's integration into the global economy of the day. The first period for analysis is the era of the Inca and pre-European contact. Its symbols of an expansive and prosperous indigenous empire, before the arrival of the Spanish, have become effective political and social tools for the spread of plurinationalism across Bolivia. The second period will address the impacts of European colonialism and its transformation after Independence in 1825 into an oligarchic system³² under numerous *caudillos*.³³ The socio-economic and ethnic stratification produced during the period of colonialism and independence still impacts contemporary views of Bolivians. Acts of rebellion, protest, and social mobilization, which began during this period, have become a normal part of Bolivian life, both before and during plurinational governance. The third section reviews the Bolivian Revolution of 1952 and the time period leading to today's Bolivian plurinationalism. During this period, the desire and the process to produce a Bolivian national identity begin to take shape. An expansion of universal suffrage and cooperation between social classes begins to produce an undercurrent of organization that will culminate in plurinationalism during the early twenty-first century.

³² Víctor Alba, *Nationalists Without Nations: The Oligarchy Versus the People in Latin America* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1968), 52.

³³ John Charles Chasteen, *Born in Blood and Fire: A Concise History of Latin America* (New York: Norton, 2001), 125. The *caudillo* of Bolivia follows the traditional definition of a wealthy and popular landowner who utilizes patronage and violence to maintain power.

A. TAHUANTINSUYU: “LAND OF THE FOUR DIRECTIONS” AND THE IMPACT OF THE INCA³⁴

The territory that encompasses modern day Bolivia was not conquered by the Incan ruler Topa Inca until 1471, considered the Late Inca or Empire Period.³⁵ This late assimilation and lack of distinct per-Incan archaeology in the highlands of Bolivia has produced a view, shared by many scholars and Bolivians alike, of a pre-European Bolivia that is indelibly associated with the Inca, distinct from the rest of the Incan empire only in the use of the Aymara language.³⁶ The contemporary use of the Incan term of *Tahuaninsuyu* implies a very positive idea of the Incan empire across the Andean region. It is a term used by the “Neo-Indian”³⁷ movement across the Andes to promote “the idealization of pre-Hispanic society and the invention of neo-rituals.”³⁸ Galinier and Molinié note that, “the finest example of [Neo-Indianism] is the Indian mobilization by Evo Morales... [he] was symbolically inaugurated at [the Festival of the Sun in Tiahuanaco] in January 2006 in identification with the cult of the Sun.”³⁹ Given the importance of its symbolism and history for contemporary identity politics, this section discusses in detail the Incan system of imperial control over its diverse populations and regions, as these provide the context in which European colonialism occurred and is today understood.

When Pizarro arrived to the Andes in 1532, the Inca Empire held a population estimated at about 5 million people⁴⁰ and incorporated territory from modern day Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Argentina, and Chile.⁴¹ The Andes exhibit extreme

³⁴ Mary Strong, *Art, Nature, and Religion in the Central Andes: Themes and Variations from Prehistory to the Present* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012), 67.

³⁵ Ann Kendall, *Everyday Life of the Incas* (New York: Dorset Press, 1973), 28.

³⁶ Jaques Galinier and Antoinette Molinié, *The Neo-Indian: A Religion for the Third Millennium* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2013), 112.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 77.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 111.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ John Murra, “Andean Societies before 1532,” in *Colonial Latin America, vol. 1 of The Cambridge History of Latin America*, ed. Leslie Bethell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 64.

⁴¹ Kendall, “Everyday Life,” 19.

“environmental and climatic changes” along three distinct areas: the coastal deserts along the Pacific Ocean, the steep sierra mountains, and the *montana* forests leading into the *selva*, or Amazon Basin.⁴² Within the sierra mountains, the Incas established the infrastructural support that connected the major settlements and capitals. The puna valleys in between the high mountain ranges provided the arable land for cultivation of flora and fauna acclimated to the high altitudes and drastic temperature changes. The Incan Empire maintained a stratified socio-economic culture, which mirrored the physical topography of the Andes Mountain range. This culture established a network of semi-autonomous settlements, with recognized rights to subsistence needs and distinct communal identities. The farther east one traveled from the imperial nucleus towards the Amazon basin, the more independent these settlements became.

The Incan agriculture system utilized an “archipelago” settlement.⁴³ John Murra writes that this system consisted of a populated “nucleus” city or capital that was supported by the “many and dispersed ecological tiers” of peripheral settlements.⁴⁴ These subsistence islands of agricultural land produced a need for labor specialization and continuous “caravan trading” by “colonists” known as *mitmaq*.⁴⁵ The constant movement between ecological areas produced a dual identity, which Harris identifies as “double domicile.”⁴⁶ The concept of double domicile describes the relation between an individual’s identity with their home communities and the larger Incan state.

Such specialized subsistence patterns developed unique kinship and ethnic communities across the empire. These communities, or *ayllus*,⁴⁷ ranged in size from a few

⁴² Ibid., 20.

⁴³ Murra, “Andean Societies,” 68.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 65.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 66.

⁴⁶ Olivia Harris “Kinship and the Vertical Economy,” *International Congress of Americanists, Actes* (Paris, 1978) IV, 165–177, quoted in John Murra, “Andean Societies before 1532,” in *Colonial Latin America, vol. 1 of The Cambridge History of Latin America*, ed. Leslie Bethell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 66.

⁴⁷ Xavier Albó, “Ethnic Identity and Politics in the Central Andes,” in *Politics in the Andes: Identity, Conflict, Reform*, ed. Jo-Marie Burt and Philip Mauceri (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004), 18.

dozen households to large population areas like *Qollasuyu*.⁴⁸ Murra describes *Qollasuyu* as, “the most densely populated quarter of the Inka State,” and included the urban center of *Tiwanaku*, located just south of Lake Titicaca.⁴⁹ The strongest identifier of ethnic *ayllu* association was language. Aymara and Quechua⁵⁰ were the primary language families along the Andes. In these regions, the ruling classes of the Inca enforced a hierarchical public works regimen known as *mit’a*.⁵¹ *Mit’a* was a labor tax based on the social situation of households within semi-autonomous highland *ayllus*. The Inca state did not require tributes of cultivated goods such as livestock or crops, but established the system through work on communal lands and infrastructure. The only true elements that were direct tributary goods to the Inca ruling and religious classes were “uncultivated goods.”⁵² Analysis of Incan *kipu*⁵³ (administrative cords dictating forms of tribute) reveals that these goods included feathers and honey gathering.⁵⁴ These ceremonial goods were only accepted from “the unmarried young” or “those who had not yet formed their own household.”⁵⁵ Murra further develops this specific resource tribute by stating that, “Nothing ‘cooked’ was owed the authority, nothing that had been cultivated or manufactured for the individual’s own storeroom.”⁵⁶ Although the Inca allowed localized control of subsistence needs and a sense of cultural individuality, the elitist structure of Incan society was strictly enforced. Kendall states that, “Individual enterprises, or ambition to possess luxury goods, were greatly discouraged for

⁴⁸ Murra, “Andean Societies,” 76.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 77. Quechua is the Spanish word taken from word *qhishwa* meaning “valley.” The native self-designation for the language is *runa simi*, meaning “the tongue of the people.”

⁵¹ Ibid., 75.

⁵² Ibid., 85.

⁵³ Ibid., 83. The *kipu* or *quipo* was an administrative tool utilized by the Inca. It consisted of braided and knotted cords where each sequenced cord represented an obligation or material. Murra notes that number quoted “may be mistranslated,” but still holds validity in group “kinds of obligations” for “ethno-categories.”

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Ibid.

commoners by laws concerning private property.”⁵⁷ Individuality existed only to a limited extent controlled by the constant presence of the Incan state.

As the empire spread across the Andes, hierarchical managerial practices pressured major changes in the ayllu labor rotation system. Specialized craftsmen, *aqlla* (women) and *yana* (men), “worked full-time as artisans, herders, and cultivators,” for and under the direct control of the Inca royalty and leaders.⁵⁸ This movement towards further labor for the elite marks a huge watershed moment. Murra states that, “*Tawantinsuyu* (or “The Land of the Four Directions,” the name for the Incan Empire) in 1500 seems to have been moving away from a fairly autonomous ethnic groups speaking their own languages, worshipping their own gods and able to provide, as an ethnic group, for most of their own needs” to a more direct system of rule.⁵⁹

Separated from the direct control of the Incan Empire were the people living in the Amazonian forests at the base of the eastern slopes of Andes. The Inca held a strong prejudice toward the semi-sedentary populations who lived and worked in the Amazonian lowlands. The forested slopes, (*montana*), and the Amazon Basin, (*selva*), provided lush cultivation areas for “coca, manioc, and tobacco.”⁶⁰ These areas provided many goods to the Incas, but they feared the drastic differences in ecological composition of these areas from the familiar Andean valleys and mountains. Kendall describes how “the swamp and insect-infested rain-forest... caused much horror among the Inca...”⁶¹ The *selva* would become the *Media Luna* line in contemporary Bolivia that separates the Aymara and Quechua populations in the Andean highlands from the groups living in the Amazonian and Chaco lowlands. These ancient prejudices continue to this day.

⁵⁷ Kendall, “Everyday Life,” 58.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 89.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 90.

⁶⁰ Kendall, “Everyday Life of the Incas,” 21.

⁶¹ Ibid.

The distinctions between Andean and highlander⁶² ethnicities, i.e., Aymara and Quechua, and groups from the *Oriente*,⁶³ or eastern lowlands, remain powerful contemporary factors that divide identities and associations with the state. Recent academic and archeological studies of pre-European Amazon cultures have overturned the long-held assumption that lowland peoples existed in small, unsophisticated hunter-gatherer groups. Within Bolivia and Peru, archeological sites in the lowlands reveal large monumental structures and ring ditches utilized for possible group rituals or gatherings.⁶⁴ William Denevan states that, “The Standard Model of simple societies (small autonomous villages) has been replaced by a New Model that includes complex societies with regionally integrated communities, relatively large populations, semi-intensive sustainable cultivation, and widespread but variable environmental impacts.”⁶⁵ The new archaeological evidence completely revises the history of lowland peoples and challenges ingrained images of their economic and cultural backwardness. Much like the economic activities during Incan rule, the extractive resources of the east today are controlled, much like tribute, by the highland west.

These aspects of Incan culture, i.e., communal-regional identity and societal stratification, are just a few details associated with the largest pre-European empire in South America. The contemporary knowledge of the Inca is filtered through the interpretations of the Spanish colonizers who began to populate the Andes after 1532. It is important to note the ethnocentric lens associated with the Spanish understandings of the Inca and how they impact Bolivian culture today. As will be discussed in detail below, practices of ethnic autonomy, rights to regional resources and self-identity shape the ethnic attitudes of indigenous Bolivians today. These ties with the Inca and the

⁶² Robert B. South, “The Economic Organization of Bolivia: An Analysis of Commodity Flows,” *Southeastern Geographer* 16, no.1 (1976): 10–11. The *Altiplano* is described as the highlands or high-plateau that stretches from southern Peru through Bolivia into Argentina. South notes that the altiplano, “comprises 30 percent of the nation’s territory, but contains 80 percent of the population.”

⁶³ Ibid., The *Oriente* is “an extensive lowland,” that runs east from the base of the Andes, or *Yunga*, into the Amazon Basin and border with Brazil. The Chaco region makes up the southeastern section of Bolivia, bordering Argentina and Paraguay.

⁶⁴ William M. Denevan, “Rewriting the Late Pre-European History of Amazonia,” *Journal of Latin American Geography* 11, no.1 (2012): 15.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 17.

colonial past explain why *indigenista*⁶⁶ and *mestizaje*⁶⁷ movements became such a powerful political tool for representation among ethnically based groups. Looking back into the past for answers to the challenges of the present has spurred many successful social organizations. In Bolivia, the associative power with the Inca produces a sense of political and cultural cohesion among “Bolivian Indianist movements,” even if only the positive attributes of the past are accepted and recognized.⁶⁸

B. COLONIALISM, INDEPENDENCE, AND CAUDILLOISMO⁶⁹

The European colonial period begins with the dramatic removal of the Inca state’s power over its expansive Andean territories. The Spanish established the Viceroyalty of Peru, composed of Upper Peru (Bolivia), Lower Peru (Peru and Northern Chile), and the Viceroyalty of the *Rio de la Plata* (Argentina).⁷⁰ The Spanish used the well-established Incan infrastructure of trans-Andean roads to connect their main concerns: silver and ports.⁷¹ Fifer makes clear the shift in geographical power, stating that, “Lima, not Cuzco, was Pizarro’s City of the Kings; the coast, not the plateau nor the high mountain basin, was to focus Spain’s authority and prestige in South America, and reap the more lasting benefits from the resources of the interior.”⁷² *Ayllu* autonomy was cast aside. The natives became a work force decimated by harsh conditions. The Spanish Crown established *encomiendas* asserting the legitimacy of their resource-bound fervor through association with religious correctness.⁷³ What is unique about the *encomienda* system in the Andes is that it is not based on land appropriations but on the “skilled human capital,”

⁶⁶ Forrest Hylton and Sinclair Thomson, *Revolutionary Horizons: Past and Present in Bolivian Politics* (London: Verso, 2007), 80.

⁶⁷ Pablo Mamani Ramirez, “Cartographies of Indigenous Power: Identity and Territoriality in Bolivia,” in *Remapping Bolivia: Resources, Territory, and Indigeneity in a Plurinational State*, ed. Nicole Fabricant and Bret Gustafson (Santa Fe, NM: School for Advanced Research Press, 2011), 33.

⁶⁸ Galinier and Molinié, “Neo-Indians,” 112.

⁶⁹ Chasteen, “Born in Blood and Fire,” 323.

⁷⁰ Valerie J. Fifer, *Bolivia: Land, Location, and Politics Since 1825* (Cambridge: University Press, 1972), 1–2.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁷² *Ibid.*

⁷³ Murra, “Andean Societies,” 67–68.

placed under a native lord or *cacique*⁷⁴ and associated regional subjects.⁷⁵ Native languages and certain cultural practices survived and merged with the implementation of Spanish beliefs, particularly Catholicism.

Spain, facing stiff economic competition from France and England, sought to extract more from its colonies. As one of the reforms to achieve this end, the *reparto de mercancías*, the “forced distribution of commodities,” raised taxes levied on the “Indians, mestizos, and creoles.”⁷⁶ In addition, the Crown put control over Upper Peru in the hands of the Viceroyalty in Buenos Aires, breaking the link between local Spanish creole rulers in La Paz and the native population. This remoteness of rule and increased exploitation weakened the legitimacy of Spanish rule and set the stage for a series of failed rebellions in 1780, led by Tupaj Amaru II (in Peru), Tupaj Katari (in Bolivia), and Tomás Katari (in Bolivia), these revolts enshrined a historical myth of the radicalism of indigenous peasants and the passivity of, “creole, mestizo, or urban plebian allies...”⁷⁷ in contemporary Bolivian social movements. Hylton and Thomson state that, “internal contradictions and illegitimacy in the eyes of the Indian populace...” enabled Amaru and the Kataris to fill “the political vacuum and [acquire] effective governing authority as well as popular acclaim throughout the region.”⁷⁸ The revolts spread across the Southern Andes, but were brutally put down by the Spanish and *peninsulares*, Spanish-born citizens who supported the Crown. The mutilated bodies of the leaders of the rebellion still stand as symbols of the unjustness of imperial rule.⁷⁹

The indigenous rebellions instilled fear in the Spanish American leadership, made up largely of creoles, that it would lose the opportunity to dominate anti-imperial movements and resulting power structures. Hylton and Thompson state that, “Creoles occupied a strategic position in colonial society, and by assuming leadership themselves,

⁷⁴ Hylton and Thomson, “Revolutionary Horizons,” 36.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 37.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 39.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 42.

they would be able to direct restive social forces so as to achieve greater political representation and autonomy for American colonists and, ostensibly, for colonized Indian subjects.”⁸⁰ Rural rebellions continued across Upper and Lower Peru. The *republiquetas*, guerrilla resistance groups dominated by mestizos, and liberal creole leaders, such as Murillo (who led an 1805 conspiracy and rebellion in La Paz) and Pumacahua (leader of an 1814 rebellion in Cuzco) led fights against Spanish loyalists. Indigenous support split between the organic uprisings led by the mestizos and creoles.

These rebellions ultimately succeeded only with the intervention of outside forces led by Simon Bolivar and José de Sucre. Independence from Spain in 1825, as a result, was not a domestic product of the local population. Bolivia as an independent nation-state was instead constructed on the beliefs, practices, ideals, and attitudes of the foreign victors, not on those of the population that lived under Spanish rule before Bolivia existed.

The liberal plans of Bolivar’s *Gran Colombia* and the establishment of the short-lived Peru-Bolivian Confederation of 1836–1839 under Sucre clashed with the realities of Bolivia’s geography and well-established colonial labor institutions. Those institutions were composed of large agrarian farms and mining communities. As a result, a coherent Bolivian nation-state failed to emerge after independence. Instead, Bolivia experienced over fifty years of strife, leadership changes, and economic disruption. Fifer states that, “unanimity of aim and outlook, involving Bolivia as a whole, was very much more difficult to achieve” than political independence.⁸¹ The lack of communication between all areas of Bolivia, so central in theories of nation-building to create a fellow-feeling of solidarity, compounded the difficulty of creating a Bolivian nation-state.⁸²

Exacerbating these difficulties, from independence until 1880, endless disputes between former military leaders (the *caudillos militares*) nullified institutional reforms,

⁸⁰ Ibid., 43.

⁸¹ Fifer, “Land, Location, and Politics,” 28.

⁸² Ibid., 27–28. Ratzel defines the identities of the state and forms of nationalism with a widespread concurrence of ideals. This shared identity or “State Idea” establishes solidarity among the population. This did not occur in Bolivia post-Independence

allowing colonial practices of patronage and tribute to continue. Between 1840 and 1849, Bolivia experienced “65 attempted *coups d'état*.”⁸³ The caudillos took hold of Bolivia as the economy began to fall, due to the deteriorating relationships and wars with Peru and Argentina. This vying for regional power and control occurred between the creole socio-economic groups who could afford to pay for and project their strength with para-military forces. The indigenous communities, or *comunidades*, in the meanwhile, continued to pay tribute to the *haciendas* that served as the base of power for creole *caudillos* vying for power.⁸⁴ In 1868, the National Constituent Assembly composed largely of elite whites and creole political leaders, designated all communal land as property of the state and removed the tributary system. The government implemented land taxes on indigenous Indians, which forced them into debt and thusly into glorified slavery.⁸⁵ The fall of the Melgarejo presidency and the disastrous War of the Pacific (1879-1880), marked the transfer from strict caudillo governance to government based on the political ideals of Liberal and Conservative parties.⁸⁶ The policies toward the indigenous remained unchanged, however. Isolation and repression of rebellion were the plans for the oligarchic party system.

C. 1898 TO 1952

The transition from the nineteenth century into the twentieth began in 1898 when Bolivia entered a civil war known as The Federal War, in which the Liberal Party overthrew the Conservative Party that had ruled since 1880. This conflict witnessed the largest gathering of indigenous Aymara in support of coercive government change since the 1780–81 revolts led by Tupaj Amaru II. It was the first revolt in which indigenous peasants joined in the fighting. The Federal War was a similar struggle between supporters of autonomous rule and reforms for indigenous communities and the oligarchs supporting centralized power of the republic.

⁸³ Heralcio Bonilla, “Peru and Bolivia from Independence to the War of the Pacific,” in *From Independence to c. 1870, vol. 3 of The Cambridge History of Latin America*, ed. Leslie Bethell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 572.

⁸⁴ Hylton and Thomson, “Revolutionary Horizons,” 50.

⁸⁵ Bonilla “Peru and Bolivia from Independence,” 575.

⁸⁶ Hylton and Thomson, “Revolutionary Horizons,” 51.

The war's greatest impact was the continued conflict between the government and the indigenous communities. Hylton and Thomson state that, indigenous, "communities defined their enemies as '*alonsistas*,' the 'rich,' 'property owners,' and those 'in contact' with *haciendados*."⁸⁷ The *comunidades* sought economic reform for the indigenous holdings. Liberal Party leader Pando had promised to end the assaults on their communal holdings by hacienda owners, but reneged. Under the new Liberal government of Pando (1899-1904) and Montes (1904-09; 1913-17), the oligarchic republic, however, continued. The Spanish-speaking elites labeled the insurgents as "blood thirsty" and holding an "insatiable thirst for revenge," indigenous rebel leaders were executed and the communities were disarmed.⁸⁸ The indigenous Aymara communities supported a Republican-led coup in 1920. Although the coup succeeded, their aim of promised autonomy secured instead the same "repression endured by the previous generation after the Federal War of 1899."⁸⁹

Indian issues were a priority for the Bolivian government during the 1920s. The government intended to control and limit the possibility of strong indigenous rebellions, but unwittingly served to further radicalize the *comunidades*. It implemented an ethnocentric approach to cure the ailments of the *comunidades*, via "the moral and cultural leadership of enlightened creoles."⁹⁰ To this end, the government enacted The "Law of Indigenous Literacy," in 1923.⁹¹ Indigenous literacy produced an unintended consequence: knowledge about social movements and ideologies viewed as radical. The Chayanta Rebellion in 1927 connected the poor and rural labor sectors with the educated urban class to form a Socialist Party that appealed to indigenous communities. Added to this internal pressure, global economic depression further threatened the Bolivian government.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 56.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 58.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 60.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Ibid., 62.

The world depression in 1929 produced devastating economic trouble for Bolivia, dependent on the export market for tin. Bolivia, eyeing the possibility of resources in the Chaco border region with Paraguay, entered the Chaco War in 1932 that lasted until 1935. The outcome of the war was another embarrassing defeat for Bolivia. Although the war was a stalemate, due to extreme exhaustion of personnel and material on both sides, Bolivia had no chance to successfully continue the war.

The Chaco War produced two unique outcomes: Bolivia returned to “a highly traditional, underdeveloped and export-dominated economy...” post-bellum, but “in terms of radical ideology and union organization, [Bolivia] had become one more advanced than many of its neighbors.”⁹²

Military control was established in Bolivia after the Chaco War and produced some of the largest reforms ever seen in the country’s history. Disenfranchised junior officers embraced the movement toward radical idealism and cast aside the traditional and elite- centered way of identifying Bolivian society. Hylton and Thomson label this period of reform “Military Socialism,” which included: “social welfare legislation,” “mandatory unionization of the workforce,” “nationalization of Standard Oil,” and the 1938 constitution focusing on the “social function of property.”⁹³

Throughout the early 1940s, rural indigenous communities began to pressure the government for more legitimate representation. The “Bolivian Indigenous Committee” and the “first National Indigenous Congress in 1945” enacted reforms to separate the traditional system of labor tribute to landowners and the hacienda system.⁹⁴ Similar to the reactions to the 1868 decision to end the tributary system, the elite did not go quietly, as they refused to obey the laws. Demonstrations and protests spread across the country, both in the urban areas of “La Paz, Cochabamba, Potosi, Chuquisaca, and Tarija,” and rural agriculture areas.⁹⁵ The 1946–47 rural protests were, according to Hylton and

⁹² Herbert S. Klein, “Bolivia from the War of the Pacific to the Chaco War, 1880–1932,” in *c.1870 to 1930, vol. 5 of The Cambridge History of Latin America*, ed. Leslie Bethell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 586.

⁹³ Hylton and Thompson, “Revolutionary Horizons,” 71.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 73.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 74.

Thompson, “the largest of the twentieth century.”⁹⁶ President Enrique Hertzog suppressed the rebellion. With a strong right-wing hand, Hertzog incarcerated protest leaders and attempted to isolate protesting groups in labor camps. The major outcome of this period was the fusing of indigenous movements, the workers unions of the mining community, and the Socialist/Leftist community. In April of 1952, this group moved to create the largest national revolution in modern South American history.

D. THE 1952 REVOLUTION AND BEYOND

The *Movimiento Nacionalista Revolucionario* (MNR) was the central political figure in the 1952 revolution. The MNR began forming as a political party during the 1930s and 1940s, from the educated middle-class in Bolivian urban centers. The rise of political movements took hold of Bolivia during this time and the MNR focused on classes and social groups that had traditionally been subject to exploitation and exclusion from political involvement. Christopher Mitchell notes the MNR’s focus was “to form a coalition including every group in Bolivian society that would join in supporting a vague reformist and nationalist political program.”⁹⁷ Historically, Bolivian social or political movements did not last long on the back of individualism. The MNR recognized the diversity of special interests in the country and sought to expand communication among many of these groups instead of focusing directly on one political ideology, socioeconomic class, or ethnic group. The MNR did rely on certain societal alliances: the *Razon de Patria* (RADEPA)⁹⁸ and the *Federacion Sindical de Trabajadores Mineros de Bolivia* (FSTMB).⁹⁹ RADEPA consisted of a coalition of junior officers who fought in the Chaco War and became disenfranchised with the elite civilian rulers, while FSTMB was Bolivia’s “first national mining union.”¹⁰⁰ With such a wide area of support, the MNR won the presidential election of 1951. The election was overturned by the

⁹⁶ Ibid.

⁹⁷ Christopher Mitchell, *The Legacy of Populism in Bolivia: From the MNR to Military Rule* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1977), 17.

⁹⁸ G.J. Dorn, *The Truman Administration and Bolivia: Making the World Safe for Liberal Constitutional Oligarchy* (University Park: Penn State University Press, 2011), 13.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 30.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

government, though, due to the MNR's association with the *Partido Obrero Revolucionario* (POR), a communist labor party. MNR supporters responded with violence.

The coalition of armed political parties led by the MNR, coercively took control of the government in La Paz in April 1952. For the first time in Bolivian history, a movement of change and revolution successfully overthrew a traditional government steeped in colonial social stratification and large-scale repressive policies. The MNR focused on the spread of a true Bolivian nationalism. In it, *indigenista* and *mestizaje* characteristics mirrored socialist and nationalist political ideals.¹⁰¹ The largest economic change implemented by the MNR began with the nationalization of the tin industry and returning control of resources back to the labor unions. The most significant political reforms for MNR indigenous supporters came with the 1953 passing of the Decree of Land Reform, universal suffrage, and the availability of free education, literacy, and health care across the country, both rural and urban.¹⁰²

The quick expansion of large financial state programs proved too costly for the MNR government. Together with these expensive social programs, inflation, economic hardships, and dependence on maintaining external resource contracts, particularly with the United States, forced the MNR to divert from its revolutionary ideals. Economic support and anti-communist sentiments from the United States, again, underscored Bolivia's reliance on external powers. In 1964, Bolivia's government experienced a return back to military rule.¹⁰³

Authoritarian rule in the 1960s and 1970s divided the urban and rural leftist/socialist alliances that had supported the 1952 Revolution. After the overthrow of leftist General Candia by General Banzer in 1971, Bolivia took a hard right turn toward conservative actions. The association of leftist groups with the growing narcotics trade of the 1970s enabled regional and U.S. support for the conservative military *junta*. The

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 80.

¹⁰² James M. Malloy and Eduardo Gamarra, *Revolution and Reaction: Bolivia, 1964–1985* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books, 1988), 9.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 81–83.

reaction of the left came with the development of *indianismo* in the arts and *katarismo* in politics, which both focused on the colonial and post-independence class-based and ethnic oppression of Bolivia's majority: its indigenous peoples. *Indianismo* was "overtly anti-Western, [and] stressed separation from non-indigenous elements, and called for reconstruction of pre-Conquest Bolivia," while *katarismo* was an expression of "ethnic consciousness [that] blended Marxist analysis with indigenous-rights claims."¹⁰⁴ Growing leftist sympathies and a deteriorating state produced protests for the establishment of democracy in Bolivia in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Bolivia was unprepared for democratization in 1982, when the mining labor unions, led by the Bolivian Workers Central (COB), and the leftist political party, Democratic Popular Unity (UDP), pressured the military junta to step down.¹⁰⁵

The mid-1980s until the early 2000s saw Bolivia undergo a massive economic and political transition. With little choice due to an inflation rate marked as one of the highest in history of "20,000 percent in 1984–1985," the new democratic government enacted neoliberal actions.¹⁰⁶ Austerity measures cut any continuing social programs, auctioned off the last remnants of nationally controlled industries, and weakened the mining economy of large resource in the western highlands.

"Capitalization"¹⁰⁷ and a renewed focus from the United States on the coca industry of the Andes, in the view of the left, projected onto Bolivia a new wave of imperialism. Once again large portions of the Bolivian population were not receiving the promised attributes of central economic reforms. Rural leftist groups, now containing the union expertise of dismissed mining workers, began mobilizing along a mix of socioeconomic and ethnic lines. The stage was set for a new political and social revolution in 200 of a type not yet seen in Bolivia.

¹⁰⁴ Roberta Rice, *The New Politics of Protest: Indigenous Mobilization in Latin America's Neoliberal Era* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2012), 76.

¹⁰⁵ Hylton and Thompson, "Revolutionary Horizons," 90.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, 95.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 99.

E. TWENTY FIRST CENTURY BOLIVIA: WATER WARS TO PLURINATIONALISM

Bolivia's indigenous groups were strengthened during the early 2000s as their conflicts with foreign entities involved in the privatization of water utilities and gas pipelines sparked a broad societal solidarity movement against transnational corporate control of water and gas.

The 2000 Water Wars were a number of public demonstrations in Cochabamba against privatization of the urban water works during a period of water scarcity. The World Bank backed the state's decision for *Aguas del Tunari*, Bechtel Enterprise (USA), and United Utilities (UK) to privatize the water works and construct a dam. Increased water rates sparked demonstrations that spread to other representative unions, such as the Teacher and Worker unions. The government was shut down and the negative publicity forced the private consortium to back out of the contract. Then, in 2003 the Gas Wars occurred when the Bolivian government sought to utilize hydrocarbon revenue to grow the Bolivian economy. U.S. and U.K. petroleum companies' direct investment in the construction of a Pacific pipeline through Chile was at the center of the conflict. Riding the success of the 2000 Water War conflict, workers and indigenous groups protested the plan to support private industry and pressured for nationalization of the Bolivian energy sector.¹⁰⁸

It was this wide-spread social mobilization for nationalization of the hydrocarbon industry that Evo Morales used to win election in December 2005 and implement nationwide social programs. Along with agrarian land reform measures and constitutional reconstruction, the Morales presidency and the Movement Toward Socialism (MAS) political party acted on long-established attitudes and feelings of anti-colonialism and *indianismo*.

Morales has transformed Bolivia in significant ways, establishing what Sebastian Mazzuca describes as, "a new and intensely plebiscitarian version of "superpresidentialism" in which the president dominates the entire decision-making

¹⁰⁸ Moisés Arce and Roberta Rice, "Societal Protest in Post-Stabilization Bolivia," *Latin American Research Review* 44, no. 1 (2009): 90–92.

process at the expense of the national legislature and receives nothing more than nominal scrutiny from other branches of government or nonpartisan oversight agencies.”¹⁰⁹

As part of this “rentier populism,”¹¹⁰ Morales has relied not only on the program of plurinationalism and the support of indigenous communities, but on an enormous expansion of the state. According to Mazzuca, “the size of the state (measured by central-government spending as a share of annual GDP) grew from a “neoliberal” average of 27 percent at century’s end to an average of nearly 40 percent ten years later.”¹¹¹ A significant part of this growth came in the form of social programs that are the subject of the next chapter.

F. CONCLUSION

Bolivia’s historical context is crucial to understanding the political and social identities of the contemporary people. The reoccurring dichotomic relationship between the ruling elite and the indigenous peasantry is revealed in every era of Bolivian history. The eras of the Inca Empire, Spanish colonialism, independence, oligarchic *caudilloismo*, the 1952 Revolution, and the decades leading up to the twenty-first century show the lack of consistent institutions to establish solidarity around a unified Bolivian national identity. An analytical comparison of the contemporary Bolivian social programs under plurinationalism and the social actions taken before the 2005 election will reveal whether identities are shifting for the diverse population toward a Bolivian national identity.

¹⁰⁹ Mazzuca, “Rise of Rentier Populism,” 109.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 113.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 119.

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III. BOLIVIAN NATIONAL IDENTITY

The analysis of ethnic and national identification is important in understanding population responses to political, economic, and social transitions in Bolivia and take up the first portion of this chapter. The dichotomy of centralized or decentralized control over broad policy changes lies at the center of Bolivia's transition to plurinationalism. The second half of this chapter will examine what tensions and responses from opposition groups (both indigenous and non-indigenous) challenge the projected aim of Morales plurinational government.

A. THE CONTRAST OF ETHNIC AND NATIONAL IDENTITY

Describing the contrast between the myriad of ethnic identities that exist in Bolivia and the overall Bolivian national identity sought under plurinationalism produces an ironic and inherent tension. This tension of plurinationalism places the centralization of nationalism against the autonomy of many ethnic groups. The factors that create such a tension have existed throughout Bolivia's history. Sharp contrast in regional features, linguistics, and cultural practices existed from the time of the Inca up to, a varying degree, contemporary Bolivia.

The 1952 Bolivian Revolution marked the first move by a Bolivian government to establish universal suffrage for reasons beyond just assimilation for economic gain, as seen during the colonial and caudillo periods. In order to incorporate such a vast range of ethnic and indigenous groups, the MNR focused on programs of modernity. The ideals of producing a Bolivian nation composed of Bolivians built off the concepts of the blended peoples: *mestizo* and the cooperation between them, *mestizaje*.

The positive view of unity though diversity offered by the MNR did not account for the complex reality of the how these terms and concepts differed from group to group and region to region. Ester Pila identifies how in the highlands the viewpoint was that, "mestizo [is] a sort of a national symbol against colonialism" yet it produced further

division between “mestizo-whites” and “mestizo-Indians.”¹¹² For some groups, *mestizaje* and *mestizo* became synonymous with Andean urban centers and the highlands. The difficulty for the MNR came with maintaining the level of socialization in the rural and lowland areas of eastern Bolivia. The traditional gap between highland and lowland Bolivia continued even after the MNR tried to form a Bolivian national identity.

When the MAS party and President Morales began forming their view of Bolivian plurinationalism they utilized populist strategies similar to those of the MNR during the 1950s and 1960s. These included social programs focusing on universal healthcare and education, funded by nationalized extractive resource rents. The major difference between the MNR and the MAS are the mobilizing symbols used to foster a national identity and cohesion. While the MNR focused on assimilating all groups toward a positivist European model of nation building, the MAS party focused on the organic ideals of native cosmology, *Pachamama* (the Andean World-Mother), and a connection with Andean history.

The remainder of this chapter will review further the relationship between aspects of ethnic and national identity in Bolivia.

The challenge with recording subjective data, i.e., ethnic self-identification, is that it can change almost immediately. The bulk of information on ethnic identities and demographic data is provided from the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP) and The Project on Parliamentary Elites in Latin America (PELA).¹¹³

The accessible LAPOP data runs from 1998 to the executive summary report of 2014. The sample size for Bolivia is divided up among the nine departments of the country. The total amount of population surveyed ranged from 300 to 400 individuals

¹¹² Esther Lopez Pila, “Constructions of Tacana Indigeneity: Recognition, Race and Indigenous Politics in Amazonian Bolivia” (doctoral thesis, University of Sussex, 2014), 155, http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/48891/1/Lopez_Pila%2C_Esther.pdf.

¹¹³ Isabel Inguanzo, “Indigenous Peoples, Democracy, and Representation: The Cases of Bolivia and Guatemala,” *Boletín Pnud & Instituto De Iberoamérica* no.2 (2011): 2–3.

across the departments, which were further divided among the municipalities of the departments.¹¹⁴

B. ETHNIC SELF-IDENTIFICATION

The LAPOP data recognizes the subjective nature of ethnic self-identification and that the term does not hold a universally accepted meaning.¹¹⁵ Ethnic self-identity is divided into two sections: indigenous group association and indigenous ethnic category. Indigenous group association is sampled among the largest indigenous groups, identified largely by linguistics and geographic region, of Quechua, Aymara, Guaraní, Chuiqitano, Mojeno, and others.¹¹⁶ The indigenous ethnic categories are divided among the social association of race and socioeconomic indicators and include, White, Mestizo/Chola, indigenous or Indian, and Black.¹¹⁷

The data reveal a notable feature in Bolivian ethnic self-identification: Bolivians favor the ethnic identifier mestizo over any other term. The definition of mestizo as being mixed between indigenous and another race reflects the reality that most Bolivians understand they have some mixed lineage. The label mestizo also affords a greater chance of social mobility for the largest percentage of the population. The terms *cholo*, *chola*, and *cholita* are specific Bolivian identifiers for a mestizo person who lives in an urban center.¹¹⁸

From the start of the LAPOP data in 1998 until 2012, ethnic self-identification experienced major shifts, as particularly in the number of individuals who identified as white and indigenous (see Figure 1).

¹¹⁴ Mitchell A. Seligson, *The Political Culture of Democracy in Bolivia: 1998* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University, 1998), 21.

¹¹⁵ Mitchell A. Seligson, Daniel Moreno Morales, and Vivian Schwarz Blum, *Democracy Audit Bolivia 2004 Report* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University, 2004), 38.

¹¹⁶ Mitchell A. Seligson, Abby B. Cordora, Juan Carlos Donoso, Daniel Moreno Morales, Diana Orcés, and Vivian Schwarz Blum, *Democracy Audit: Bolivia 2006 Report* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University, 2006), 15.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹¹⁸ Raúl Madrid, "Politics, Socioeconomic Status, and Indigenous Identity in Latin America: The Bolivian Case," a paper presented at the 2006 meeting of Latin American Studies Association, San Juan, Puerto Rico (2006): 17–18.

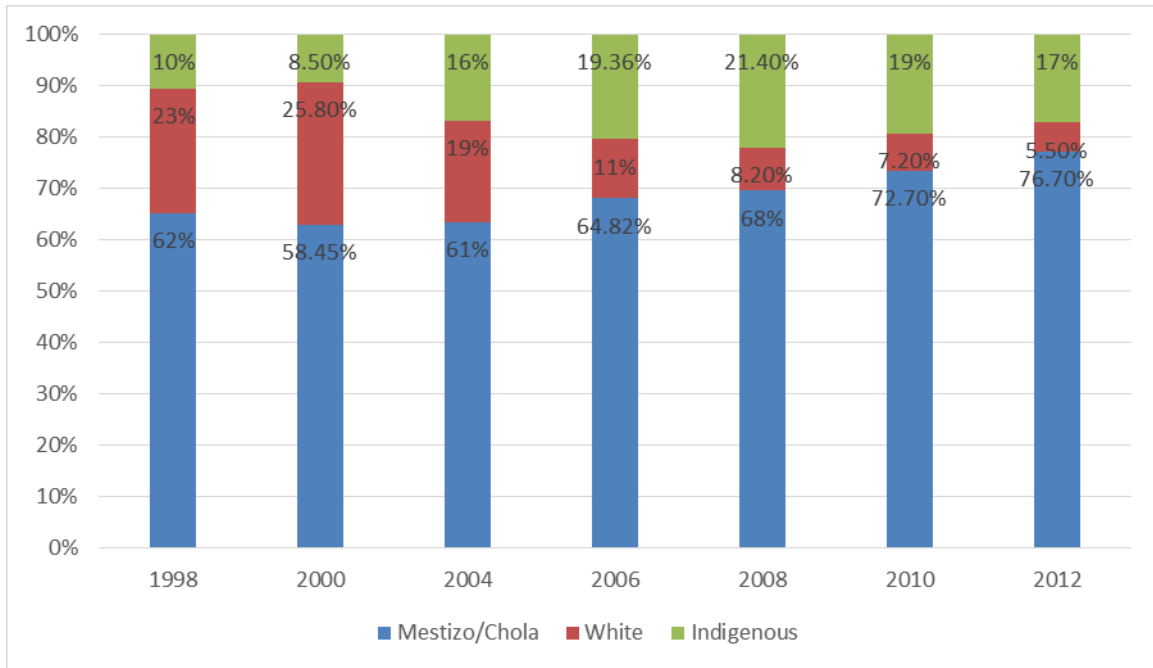


Figure 1. Ethnic Self-Identification¹¹⁹

The greatest change in ethnic re-identification occurs during the indigenous social movements over the course 2002 to 2004. There is a drop in mestizo and white identification and a rise in indigenous identity. The mestizo slightly rises after the political transition and the white and indigenous begin to slightly decrease over the next few surveyed years. This trend is evidence of the power that political mobilization has on the individual identity of Bolivians.

C. INDIGENOUS ASSOCIATION AND REGIONAL ASSOCIATION

Indigenous group identification is primarily with of the two largest groups, Aymara or Quechua, with slight increases in identification with the smaller indigenous groups, Guaraní, Chuiqitano, Mojeno, and others.

The growth of indigenous identification correlates positively with departmental representation as well. The political context validates the ethnic/indigenous identities and then produces stronger identities within a region and department. Respondents who

¹¹⁹ Adapted from “LAPOP data from yearly reports starting from 1998–2012,” Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University. Data from 2002 excluded due to insufficient specific data on ethnic percentages.

identify most with their departments are more likely to associate themselves with a national community and identify themselves as Bolivians. The 2006 LAPOP report states and Figure 2 demonstrates that, “The sense of belonging to something smaller, like a department or particular cultural group, seems to be generating the conditions for people to feel part of the national community.”¹²⁰

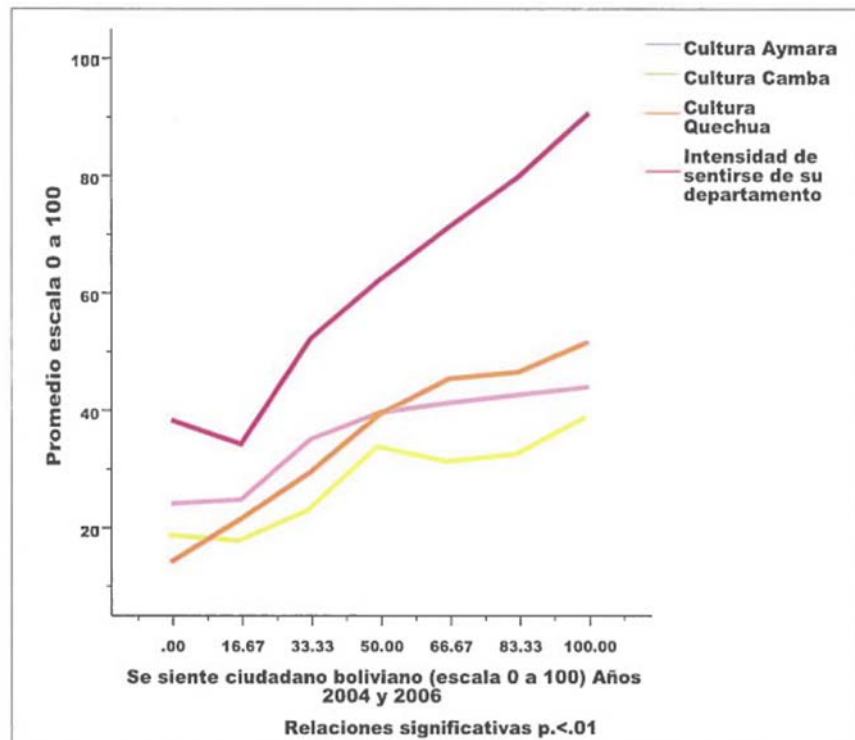


Figure II-8. Intensity of Cultural and Regional Identities, by Intensity of National Identity

Figure 2. Intensity of Cultural and Regional Identification, by Intensity of National Identity¹²¹

From 2006–2010, there was a continued rise in national identification and a decrease in departmental identification. The first few years of the Morales’ presidency established the populist political and economic features of nationalization in extractive energy industries that enabled redistributive social programs. In 2010, however, there was

¹²⁰ Seligson, “Bolivia 2006 Report,” 25.

¹²¹ Source: Ibid.

a sharp transition from national identification back to departmental identity. This shift in identity occurred after the 2009 Bolivian Constitution took effect and the struggle escalated between the central government and regions over autonomous control of hydrocarbons. Indigenous rights to territorially extracted resources were established well before the 2009 Constitution. Isabella Radhuber identifies four key legal acts that established indigenous rights: Bolivia's 1991 ratification of Convention 169 of the International Labor Organization (ILO), the 1994 Bolivian Constitution (establishing the right to collective land titles, or *Tierras Comunitarias de Origen* (TCO), the 2005 Hydrocarbon Laws (mandating indigenous representation in decision making on hydrocarbon and environmental practices), and the 2006 *Pacto de Unidad* which reinforced indigenous rights regarding the management of resources and compensation for their extraction.¹²²

The 2009 Constitution offers a suggestion of rights to indigenous involvement in extractive resource management. Article 30 of the Bolivian Constitution recognizes, "the right and obligatory consultation [of indigenous peoples] is respected and guaranteed, it is performed by the state, undertaken in good faith and in an agreed manner, regarding the use of non-renewable resources in the territories."¹²³ The terms "good faith" and "agreed manner" imply an expectation of cooperation between the central government and indigenous communities. The Article goes on to support cultural rights and involvement with the decision process over non-renewable resources. Radhuber, however, highlights an essential element missing that would nationally validate the legitimacy of indigenous participation: indigenous communities' right to veto extraction contracts.¹²⁴ Article 359 reinforces the lack of teeth in indigenous involvement in the determination of resource actions within their indigenous territory; it states, "The state...exercises the right of possession and production of natural gas throughout the

¹²² Isabella M. Radhuber, "Indigenous Struggles for a Plurinational State: An Analysis of Indigenous Rights and Competences in Bolivia," *Journal of Latin American Geography* 11, no. 2 (2012): 176–177.

¹²³ Ibid., 175.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

country and is the only entity authorized to commercialize the resource. The totality of incomes obtained by the commercialization of natural gas will be owned by the state.”¹²⁵

D. LEVELS OF VICTIMIZATION AND SOCIAL PROTEST

Tensions over Bolivian hydrocarbons coincide with long-established attitudes of East/West and Highland/Lowland cultural distinctions. Within Bolivia, the Western urban capitals composed of Aymara and Quechua indigenous identities constitutes the majority support for “pro-MAS” centralized government, while the East, designated the “Media Luna” or half-moon (see Figure 3), strongly defends autonomous *Tierra Comunitarias de Origen* (Communal Lands of Origin) rights toward territorial hydrocarbons.¹²⁶

The Guaraní make up the majority of the indigenous groups that inhabit the rural oil territories in the departments of Tarija, Chuquisaca, and Santa Cruz.¹²⁷ Gustafson quotes a Guaraní individual as saying that, “At least with the multinationals [private oil companies], we knew we had the enemy in front of us. Now the state is all around us.”¹²⁸ The expansion of exploration for further extractive resource sites has produced further tensions and indigenous/rural grievances, over cultural and environmental land rights. Such complaints sparked, two major protests: the *Marcha Por la Defensa del Territorio, la Autonomia y los Derechos de los Pueblos Indigenas* (March for the Defense of the Territory, autonomy and the Rights of Indigenous Peoples) by the CIDOB (Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Bolivia) in 2010 and the “*March por el TIPNIS*” (March through the Isiboro Sécore National Park and Indigenous Territory), and the “North Indigenous March in 2012.”¹²⁹

¹²⁵ Ibid., 177.

¹²⁶ Fabricant and Gustafson, “Remapping Bolivia,” 69.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 68.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 184.

¹²⁹ Radhuber, “Indigenous Struggles,” 171.



Figure 3. The “Media Luna” (darker areas of the map)¹³⁰

Protests are the norm of expression in Bolivian civil society. There is a strong historical tradition of active protesting that spurs mass involvement from all departments and social sectors of the Bolivian population. The rise in public protest since 2010 reflects the inefficiencies of government institutions and feelings of victimization.

While Bolivian identities are divided along the lines of indigenous versus non-indigenous representation and centralized versus regional economic resource control, the ideal of normative democratic representation and involvement is shared across Bolivia.¹³¹

The next chapter considers whether social programs funded by energy rents have helped to consolidate Bolivian society around a national consciousness or whether they have maintained or worsened the existing regional and ethnic divisions documented in this chapter.

¹³⁰ Adapted from Lopez, “Constructions of Tacana Indigeneity,” 32. <http://upsidedownworld.org/bolivia-archives-31/1388-total-recall-in-bolivia-divided-nation-faces-historic-vote>.

¹³¹ Morales, “Culture of Democracy in Bolivia, 2008,” 152.

IV. BOLIVIA'S SOCIAL PROGRAMS

A. SOCIAL PROGRAMS AND NATIONAL POLITICS

The social programs enacted both before and after 2005 focused largely on two areas: healthcare and expanded educational opportunities. Healthcare and education directly impact the daily quality of life of poor indigenous populations. Nor were universal suffrage and acknowledgment of primary grievances of the suppressed majority in Bolivia by the revolutionary governments of the MNR and MAS based solely on altruism. Both parties utilized class and ethnic tensions across the broader Bolivian population to gain political power. Further analysis in each of the time frames will note the positive and negative outcomes, with respect to national cohesion, of the programs the parties utilized to bolster national and political support.

B. BOLIVIAN SOCIAL PROGRAMS PRE-2005

This section analyzes government social program under the MNR government from 1952 to 1964. Prior to the national revolution, social welfare support came solely from traditional institutions, such as the Catholic Church, and indigenous cultural practices.

The MNR employed an ideology of revolutionary political, economic, and social change. The merging of all these interests into one national view of Bolivia had never existed prior to the 1952 Revolution. James Malloy recognizes three primary characteristics needed for a successful state revolution: “(1) an anti-status quo elite placed at the middle or upper middle levels of stratification, (2) a mobilized mass formed as the result of the revolution of expectations, and (3) an ideology or a widespread emotional state to help communication between leaders and followers and to create collective enthusiasm.”¹³² All three seemed to exist in 1952. The MNR expanded its support through populist actions and promises across a large horizontal constituency of labor

¹³² James M. Malloy, *Bolivia: The Uncompleted Revolution*, (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1970), 329.

unions, urban middle classes, and indigenous peasantry.¹³³ The nationalization of the mining industry and the Decree of Land Reform of 1953 established higher involvement for the broader classes of workers and peasant farmers.¹³⁴ The change of power from the hacienda system empowered the lower socioeconomic classes to demand further development of opportunities to satisfy basic needs in education and health care.

The MNR's assumption was that by accomplishing the primary objectives of securing national control of the mining industry and overthrowing the traditional oligarchic elite, all social grievances, specifically those from indigenous communities, would fall away over time. The MNR, however, had to react almost immediately to those indigenous pressures that did match the primary objectives of the Revolution. Malloy notes that, "whatever the history of protest activity, the Indian played no role to speak of in the insurrection of April 1952."¹³⁵ However, shortly thereafter, protest activity spread with incredible rapidity throughout the countryside, and the Indian quickly became a political actor of the first magnitude.¹³⁶

The indigenous communities' demand for expanded education, particularly in the rural areas of the country, began after the Chaco War and "military socialism" governments of the 1940s.¹³⁷ The pressure from the indigenous peasantry for educational access served a dual purpose for the MNR: Education gave rural lower socioeconomic classes the perception of social mobility, and created further political support for the MNR. Hylton and Thomson note that, "Taken together, land distribution, the creation of MNR peasant trade unions and rural schools, and voting rights gave the MNR something like a hegemony over the indigenous peasant communities and individual smallholders."¹³⁸

¹³³ Hylton and Thompson, "Revolutionary Horizons," 77.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 78–79.

¹³⁵ Malloy, "Uncompleted Revolution," 193–194.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, 194.

¹³⁷ Hylton and Thompson, "Revolutionary Horizons," 70–71.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 80.

The education programs implemented by the MNR government, however, focused largely on redefining the cultural identities of the indigenous peasantry. Molly Geidel analyzes the role education played in the developing economic and political relations the MNR established with the United States. The United States, as part of its Cold War policy of containment, sought to prevent communist ideals and practices spreading in Latin America. It bolstered U.S. companies' tin contracts with Bolivia and pushed the MNR toward anti-communist programs. State-supported education was a prime avenue to accomplish this. The MNR focused on elevating what Silvia Rivera calls, the "urbanized '*gente decente*' (mestizo), [and] suppressing not only the indigenous radicalism...but all vestiges of indigenous culture."¹³⁹ Education remained as a keystone in indigenous communities' abilities to expand self-determination and representation, but under the MNR, it was viewed as a degradation of stronger indigenous cultural autonomy.

Very similar indigenous attitudes arose with the implementation of the MNR health care program. On their face, these reforms appeared as progressive efforts to improve rural health, particularly among women and children. The MNR health reform focused primarily on maternal and infant morbidity rates in indigenous communities (see Table 1). The MNR's partnership with the United States supported Pan-American Sanitary Bureau (PASB) (now the Pan-American Health Organization), established health training facilities and hospital across Bolivia.¹⁴⁰ Although, according to official MNR records, maternal and infant care improved in rural areas, Nicole Pacino argues that the MNR used false information on improved maternal and infant survivability rates to bolster its political image. She goes on to state that, "In 1970, the infant mortality rate was about 15 percent, roughly that same as the 1950s," when twenty-five percent of rural babies died before age 1 (see Table 1).¹⁴¹

¹³⁹ Molly Geidel, "Sowing Death in Our Women's Wombs: Modernization and Indigenous Nationalism in the 1960s Peace Corps and Jorge Sanjines Yawar Mallku," *American Quarterly* 62, no. 3 (2010): 771.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 66.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 80.

Table 1. Maternal and Infant Mortality Prior to 1952 Revolution¹⁴²

1950	10% - 18% Overall Mortality Rate in Bolivia	
1950	Maternal Deaths: 8.3 / 1000 births	Infant Deaths: 108.7 / 1000 births
1953	Maternal Deaths: 15.9 / 1000 births	Infant Deaths: 182.8 / 1000 births
Approximately 25 percent of rural babies died before their first birthday.		

The reforms had another outcome; they effectively stigmatized indigenous health practices and culture, in the name of modernization and a new Bolivian identity as a modern nation-state. The MNR projected its ideology of *mestizaje* onto women's and children's health.¹⁴³ The MNR government focused on "pro-natalism"¹⁴⁴ as a medium toward Bolivian nationalism. Government support focused largely on what the Bolivian newspaper, *La Nacion*, called the "greatest sanitary problem," of indigenous birthing practices.¹⁴⁵ Indigenous practices and cultures became the acknowledged obstacle on the path toward Bolivian modernity and national identity. Although maternal and infant care improved in rural areas, health service patronage (medical services exchanged for work or material goods) was prevalent. The lack of professional documentation, the divide between urban and rural levels of service, and the inability to financially maintain expanded health infrastructure led the MNR's health program to fall apart.¹⁴⁶ The lack of supportive infrastructure and financial instability limited the amount of care that could reach the isolated rural sections of the country.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴² Adapted from Ibid., 67.

¹⁴³ Nicole L. Pacino, "Creating Madres Campesinas: Revolutionary Motherhood and the Gendered Politics of Nation Building in 1950s Bolivia," *Journal of Women's History* 27, no. 1 (2015): 64.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 65.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 67.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 80.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

The MNR's ideology of a national identity for Bolivia, dependent on state supported social programs, did not account for the stronger group identities of the leftist workers unions and indigenous communities. Malloy states that, "it is the removal of an obstacle which makes a revolution possible."¹⁴⁸ The true obstacle needed for removal was not the removal of the traditional elite but the inherent dependence Bolivia retained on outside influence. Rising inflation and a failing market economy pushed the MNR to side with the United States for social, economic, and political support, a dependence that continued for the next 50 years. This led to its failure to sustain the first and third criteria for Malloy's revolution. A totally independent and inclusive Bolivian national identity fell to the way side.

C. BOLIVIAN SOCIAL PROGRAMS 2005–2013

The decades leading up the twenty-first century in Bolivia marked an ever-expanding ideological and conceptual gap between a conservative government and a growing radicalized populous. The IMF and World Bank supported economic reforms in the 1980s and 1990s that privatized industries that Bolivian people took great existential perspective from. The restructuring of the mining labor force led to the displacement of unionized miners to the coca fields, and the rise of the *cocaleros*. The *cocaleros*, under the organization of the Coca Leaf Producers' Union,¹⁴⁹ used a traditional symbol of cosmological belief and daily coca-leaf consumption to foster anti-imperialist attitudes.¹⁵⁰ The 2001 "Water War" in Cochabamba and the 2003 "Gas War" of El Alto set the stipulations of what would become known as the "October Agenda."¹⁵¹

The culmination of the *cocaleros*' social mobilization and anti-imperial views toward foreign economic controls was the rise of Evo Morales and the *Movimiento al Socialismo*, Movement for Socialism, or MAS party. As a primary leader in the coca unions, Morales knew how to leverage traditional populist concerns; he and MAS concentrated on majority indigenous representation in parliament. Once elected in 2005,

¹⁴⁸ Malloy, "Uncompleted Revolution," 331.

¹⁴⁹ Radhuber, "Indigenous Struggles," 171.

¹⁵⁰ Hylton and Thomson, "Revolutionary Horizons," 97.

¹⁵¹ Radhuber, "Indigenous Struggles," 170–171.

Morales focused on enacting the October Agenda: nationalization of the hydrocarbon and natural gas industry and the restructuring of the national Constitution. The increase in global natural gas and oil prices during the early 2000s allowed for an exponential growth in Bolivia's GDP and government revenues grew further under the nationalized stipulations.¹⁵² The revenue allowed Morales and the MAS party to attempt to spread horizontally their legitimacy through three energy-rent-supported social programs: *Renta Dignidad*, *Bono Juancito Pinto*, and *Bon Juana Azurduy*.¹⁵³

1. Renta Dignidad

The Dignity Pension is a “noncontributive pension to Bolivian citizens over age 60.”¹⁵⁴ *Renta Dignidad* provides a critical service to a historically neglected sector of the population. The program came into existence during the Lozanda administration (First Presidency 1993–1997; Second Presidency 2002–2003) as part of the *Bono Solidario* or, BONOSOL, initiative to support the growing aging population among the poorest sectors of the country.¹⁵⁵ *Renta Dignidad* became a lynch pin in the quality of life for the elderly community and expanded their identification with citizenship. Morales' augmentation of the BONOSOL/Lozanda program included lowering the age of eligibility from 65 to 60 and increasing the yearly pay-out to between 1,800 and 2,400 Bolivianos (US\$260 and 347).¹⁵⁶ Bolivia, as a result has the highest percentage of pension coverage in Latin America (see Figure 4). Bolivians over the age of 65 currently make up six percent of the population, a total of 630,000 persons.¹⁵⁷ The rent-supported pension plan is their only

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 173.

¹⁵⁴ Fiona Clark, “Guest Article: Renta Dignidad,” *Global Action on Aging*, accessed May 04, 2016, www.globalaging.org/pension/world/2008/Renta.htm.

¹⁵⁵ James W. McGuire, “Conditional Cash Transfers in Bolivia: Origins, Impact, and Universality,” paper prepared for the 2013 Annual Meeting of the *International Studies Association*, San Francisco, April 3–6, 2013, Wesleyan University (2013): 11–12.

¹⁵⁶ Radhuber, “Indigenous Struggles,” 173.

¹⁵⁷ The World Bank, “Population ages 65 and above (% of total),” Data, accessed May 05, 2016, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.65UP.TO.ZS>.

source of income.¹⁵⁸ Such single income dependency is accompanied by several challenges: the lack of official or appropriate documentation, mandatory in-person funds collection, scamming, identity theft, and anti-*Renta Dignidad* protests by the *De las Cacerolas Vacías* group. The De las Cacerolas Vacías, or “Empty Pots,” protest against the pension social program because they argue it raises the cost of basic goods, such as produce.¹⁵⁹

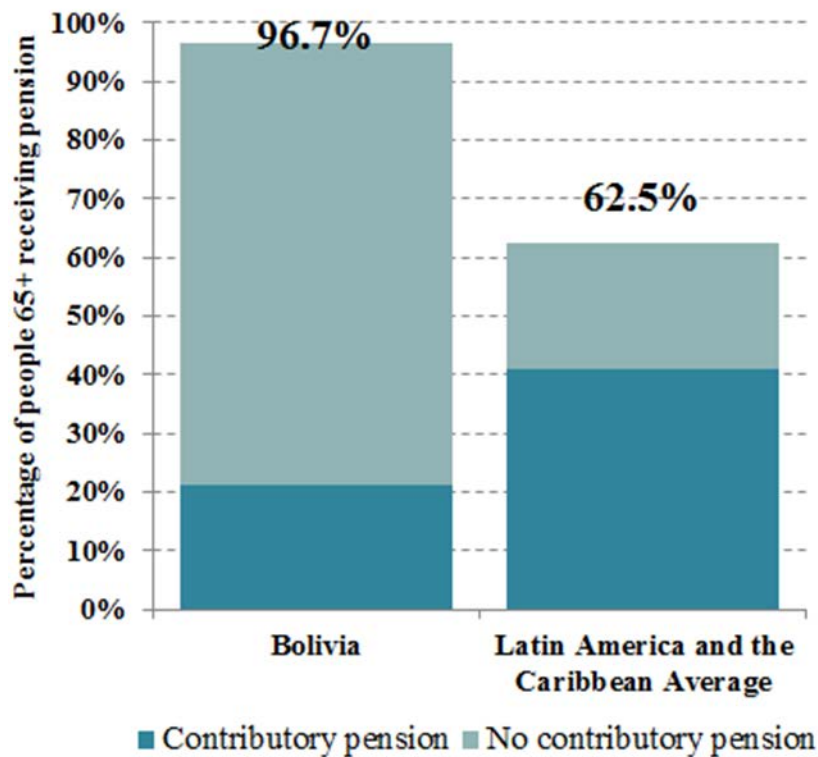


Figure 4. Bolivian Pension Comparison with Latin America¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁸ Rebecca Wearmouth, “The Right to Dignity: An Overview of the Situation for the Elderly in Bolivia,” Projects Abroad, CochaBanner Bolivia, accessed May 03, 2016, www.cocha-banner.org/issues/2009/june/the-right-to-dignity.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. and Tarija Bolivia, “Organizan marcha de cacerolas vacías en Tarija,” last updated September 30, 2013, www.tarijabolivia.net/2013/09/organizan-marcha-de-cacerolas-vacias-en.html.

¹⁶⁰Source: Inter-American Development Bank, “Better Pensions, Better Jobs: Towards Universal Coverage in Latin America and The Caribbean,” 2015, <http://universalcoverage.net/bolivia>

2. Bono Juancito Pinto

The education subsidy of *Bono Juancito Pinto* was the first social program instituted after Morales became president in 2006.¹⁶¹ The MAS government reiterated the driving need to reduce the high drop-out rate of children from primary and secondary schooling, occurring across Bolivia and the rest of Latin America.¹⁶² Like *Renta Dignidad*, MAS did not originate the idea for such a social program. James McGuire notes that the Lozanda administration established a similar plan to subsidize young female students enrollment in primary and secondary schooling to increase Bolivia's gender parity index (GPI).¹⁶³ The MAS administration's *Bono Juancito Pinto* social subsidy, however, applies to all children who are eligible to attend primary and secondary school and each student receives an annual cash amount of 200 Bolivianos (US\$ 28.50).¹⁶⁴ The program is named after a twelve-year old drummer boy who was killed during the War of the Pacific.¹⁶⁵ Such symbolism ties the program with Morales's use of strong emotional responses to Bolivia's past and projection of militant nationalism.

In reality, *Bono Juancito Pinto* demonstrates ineffective government quality assurance and support that has resulted in a worsening drop-out rate. The US\$ 28.50 given annually to each Bolivian student does not account for factors like transportation to the school and school supplies. A 2015 U.S. Embassy report noted the actual schooling costs range from "rural Sucre at US\$ 141/year" to urban schools such as "El Alto at US\$ 410/year."¹⁶⁶ The Bolivian government claims that it has further expanded the program and promises future increases in funding; a harsh reality, however, is continuance of child labor across Bolivia. The United States Department of Labor notes that Bolivia's children

¹⁶¹ McGuire, "Conditional Cash Transfers in Bolivia," 8.

¹⁶² La Razón, "Pago del Bono Juancito Pinto comenzará el 20 de Octubre," Sociedad, accessed 03 May, 2016, www.la-razon.com/index.php?url=/sociedad/Pago-Bono-Juancito-Pinto-comenzara_0_2111788875.html.

¹⁶³ McGuire, "Conditional Cash Transfers in Bolivia," 9–10.

¹⁶⁴ Radhuber, "Indigenous Struggles," 173.

¹⁶⁵ McGuire, "Conditional Cash Transfers in Bolivia," 8.

¹⁶⁶ Bureau of International Labor Affairs, "2014 Finding on the Worst Forms of Child Labor: Bolivia," United States Department of Labor, accessed May 05, 2016, <http://www.dol.gov/agencies/ilab/resources/reports/child-labor/bolivia>.

are “engaged in the worst forms of child labor, including in agriculture and in mining.”¹⁶⁷ With regard to primary schooling, the out-of-school-children numbers jumped from 27,530 in 2009 to 169,291 in 2013.¹⁶⁸ The small cash incentives of *Bono Juancito Pinto* in 2010 totaled US\$ 54 million, given to 1.6 million children, which equated to only 0.25 percent of Bolivia’s GDP.¹⁶⁹ Moreover, MAS has used these for electioneering: McGuire recounts how during the 2009 presidential election cycle distribution of public cash transfers for *Bono Juancito Pinto* coincided with the political campaigning of the MAS party.

3. Bono Juana Azurduy

Before the presidential election of 2009, President Morales enacted Supreme Decree 0066 that established a maternal and infant child social program. *Bono Juana Azurduy*, like the *Bono Juancito Pinto*, takes as its namesake a historical figure. A mother and freedom fighter in the independence movement against the Spanish Empire, Azurduy is a popular symbol of resistance and tenacity, who is valued across the Andes.¹⁷⁰ The Azurduy program was created out of other health programs concerned with mother/infant support and malnutrition of young children. The support for these programs came from international institutions that include the World Bank (funding the Zero Malnutrition Program), Inter-American Development Bank, United Nations World Food Program, and United Nations Population Fund.¹⁷¹

In 2013, the program documented 409,778 mothers and 598,358 children that benefited from the payment of 1,820 Bolivianos or US\$260 over the gestation period and birth of the child (see Table 2). The requirements for the pregnant women to receive these

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ The World Bank, “Out-of-school children of primary school age male and female,” Data, accessed May 04, 2016, <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.UNER.FE> and <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SE.PRM.UNER.MA>.

¹⁶⁹ McGuire, “Conditional Cash Transfers in Bolivia,” 13.

¹⁷⁰ Chasteen, “Born in Blood and Fire,” 111–112.

¹⁷¹ McGuire, “Conditional Cash Transfers in Bolivia,” 18.

funds include attending educational activities, complying with doctors' recommendations, and prenatal checkups conducted at an approved health center.¹⁷²

Table 2. Bono Juana Azurduy Financial Support¹⁷³

Recipient	Stewardship	Amount in BOB / US\$*	Total
Pregnant Woman	1 st Prenatal	50 BOB/\$7.31	320 BOB/\$46.81
	2 nd Prenatal	50 BOB/\$7.31	
	3 rd Prenatal	50 BOB/\$7.31	
	4 th Prenatal	50 BOB/\$7.31	
	Institutional Birth Postnatal	120 BOB / \$17.55	
Child Under 2 yrs. Old	Bi-Monthly Check of Comprehensive Care for Child	125 BOB/\$18.28 every 2 months	1,500 BOB/\$219.40
		Total	1,820BOB/ \$266.21

*Bolivian Boliviano to U.S. dollar based on 2016 exchange rates.

The positive trends in child survivability to age 5 and maternal mortality ratios indicate the effectiveness of these health and nutrition programs. Child mortality under 5 years old per 1000 live births dropped from 61.4 in 2005 to 38.4 in 2015. The percentage of underweight children less than 5 years old fell from 5.9 percent in 2004 to 4.5 percent in 2008. The maternal mortality ratio per 100,000 live births also fell from 334 in 2000 to 206 in 2015. As of 2010, Bolivia received a total of U.S. \$73 million in Official Development Assistance (ODA) for health, with US\$ 13.3 million designated for reproductive health and family planning. Bolivia receives the highest amount of ODA in South America.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷² United Nations Population Fund: Bolivia, "Bolivia Juana Azurduy," accessed May 04, 2016, <http://bolivia.unfpa.org/content/bono-juana-azurduy>.

¹⁷³ Adapted from Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ World Health Organization, "Official Development Assistance (ODA) For Health to Bolivia (Plurinational State Of)," accessed May 05, 2015, http://www.who.int/gho/governance_aid_effectiveness/countries/bol.pdf.

D. THE CHALLENGES OF BOLIVIA'S SOCIAL PROGRAMS

From the inception of the social programs of *Bono Juana Azurduy*, *Bono Juancito Pinto*, and *Renta Dignidad*, some positive changes in health, education, and elderly support have occurred. These programs were modeled on the conditional cash transfer programs (CCTs) of Brazil (*Bolsa Escola* and *Bolsa Familia*) and Mexico (*Progres*a).¹⁷⁵ CCTs are a popular form in distributing social funds to the poor because of the perception that cash in hand cannot be corrupted or taken away; in reality, these programs are connected to incumbent political power and campaigning. Díaz-Cayeros and Magaloni note that CCTs in Latin America are “discretionary...politicians can start, stop, or otherwise change benefits across the board by decree.”¹⁷⁶ Whether this applies to Bolivia remains to be seen.

In Bolivia, the rents from hydrocarbon and mining industries are portrayed by the Morales and the MAS as “the patrimony of all Bolivians,” which legitimizes the universality of the programs.¹⁷⁷ Morales Escoffier, quoted in McGuire’s essay, argues that,

Bolivians have evolved sense of ownership over the CCTs and other social assistance programs, which are no longer considered a temporary public benefit, but rather an acquired human right, which means that the population will demand that these programs are continued at any cost.¹⁷⁸

The Bolivian government faces a steep challenge, as these social programs that depend on the international energy market. These social programs address socio-economic class issues, not the expanding social and political grievances of indigenous autonomy and strong central government control.

Bolivia’s CCT social programs are tied directly to the international energy market. When oil and hydrocarbon prices are high, as they were in the late 1990s and early 2000s, the coffers hold larger reserves for social programs, but when the market

¹⁷⁵ Alberto Díaz-Cayeros and Beatriz Magaloni, “Aiding Latin America’s Poor,” *Journal of Democracy* 20, no.4 (2009), 38.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 40.

¹⁷⁷ McGuire, “Conditional Cash Transfers in Bolivia,” 27.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

falls, so does the social investment. Aside from the inherent volatility in revenue, the true deficiencies lie with the governmental support system. Much like the precariousness of Bolivia's largely global market dependent extractive economy, the budget for social CCT programs are not legally fixed in the country's constitution or other legal documentation. Bolivia also lacks the expansive quality assurance and managerial programs need to reach the entire country.

The "demand side" for social programs is alive and well in a population that has developed a strong representative attitude toward civil society.¹⁷⁹ The lack of transparency in the delineation of what assistance goes where and corrective data analysis suggests that these programs are susceptible to political manipulation even though all Bolivians who qualify can receive the support. Díaz-Cayeros and Magalon use the term "Reverse Robin Hood effect" to show how social programs are given to the poor for reciprocal political support.¹⁸⁰ This does not necessarily sow feelings of national unity.

Bolivian national cohesion has experienced extreme peaks and valleys over the last 60 years since the 1952 Revolution. The MNR viewed national cohesion along the lines of class modernization and bringing the indigenous communities up to the same quality of life and practices of creoles and mestizos. The MAS government views national cohesion as ethnic and political reinforcement for central political control.

Both the MNR and MAS have used redistributive strategies through social programs in pensions, education, and maternal-infant health care to spread legitimacy of their political control.

The MNR failed to maintain its level of social commitment due to Bolivia's dependency on the world energy market and its relationships with external actors. The MAS, faces similar pressures on its social support efforts. The social programs have produced an identity among the poorer and older demographics of the Bolivian population as relying on the state and being financially dependent. The expectation of

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 28.

¹⁸⁰ Cayeros and Magaloni, "Aiding Latin America's Poor," 36.

continued financial support from the state assumes that the Bolivian GDP and relationships with international institutions and donor governments will remain positive.

These programs to date lack the detail and depth of effectiveness beyond individual political party strategies to gain votes. Radhuber states that, “Although the redistributive initiatives...provide measurable positive economic figures, they do not reflect serious commitment to the plural economic model described in the Constitution.”¹⁸¹

¹⁸¹ Radhuber, “Indigenous Struggles,” 174.

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V. CONCLUSION

This thesis examined whether redistribution of natural resource wealth through social programs enables establishment of a durable, new, and genuinely national identity in Bolivia. Such an identity would encompass all Bolivians as equal participants in a national community with distinct historical and mythical features. The ethno-populist strategies of Evo Morales and the MAS party have proclaimed broad inclusion of Bolivians across ethnicity and socio-economic class. Led by Morales, Radhuber writes that, “indigenous-peasant groups developed a plurinational state project to strengthen indigenous-peasant self-determination, which is now inscribed in the 2009 Constitution.”¹⁸² The political symbolism of plurinationalism seems to be consensually accepted by indigenous groups. Actualization of plurinationalism, however, through equal redistribution of rent income and central government support of ethnic group autonomy in local decision-making, particularly over hydrocarbon resources, has failed to materialize.¹⁸³ As Radhuber concludes, “new indigenous resistance movements have emerged, demanding further control over their territories and resources.”¹⁸⁴

The thesis finds that energy-rent-supported social programs have not yielded a cohesive national identity durable over the long-term. The establishment of redistributive social programs and MAS’ reiteration of blame on suppressive foreign neo-liberal policies have made Morales appear to be a savior of Bolivia to many citizens. MAS’ energy-rent-supported social programs have merely promoted short-term political support for Morales and his party, while regional identities appear to have strengthened, and new regional and identity divisions have emerged. The realistic consequences of Morales’ all-inclusive ethnopopulism has been what Radhuber identifies as an increase in localized

¹⁸² Radhuber, “Indigenous Struggles,” 168.

¹⁸³ Ibid. 181.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., 168.

indigenous identities and grievances, as well as increased division between peasant and indigenous groups.¹⁸⁵

Bolivia's Left Turn toward a new state structure based on plurinationalism and recognition of indigenous self-determination developed into a U-Turn. A spring of social mobilization prepared the fertile ground for Bolivia's first indigenous president to finally enable the majority of its citizens to establish what Guillermo O'Donnell labels as a "high-quality representative democracy."¹⁸⁶ The reality of new state formation has proved far more complex.

Bolivia still lacks a cohesive national identity. The country is riven along geographic, ethnic, economic, and social lines. Bolivia still depends on extractive resources just as it did before there was a Bolivia. Bolivian still depends on the *caudillo* style leadership in Evo Morales. As protests and civil demonstrations have remained the norm, the government has become more centralized.¹⁸⁷ Morales and his government use emotional appeals and coercive control of the economy to keep power.¹⁸⁸

Mass political support, nationalization of extractive resources, state centralization in a super-presidency, and the deeply ingrained traditions of patrimonialism and patronage have produced, however, what Mazzuca terms "rentier populism."¹⁸⁹ There is little evidence that Morales' government is genuinely committed to the plural economic model outlined in his 2009 Plurinational Constitution, as he has systematically increased his control over the state over his time in office.¹⁹⁰

Instead, Bolivia under plurinationalism seems to be underscoring the finding that, in heterogeneous societies, economic issues are indeed ethnic issues.¹⁹¹ It was noted in

¹⁸⁵ Isabella M. Radhuber, "Extractive Processes, Global Production Networks and Inequalities," Working Paper Series, no. 89, desiguALdades.net (2015): 13.

¹⁸⁶ Guillermo O'Donnell, quoted in Mazzuca, "Rentier Populism," 109.

¹⁸⁷ Radhuber, "Indigenous Struggles," 177.

¹⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 178.

¹⁸⁹ Mazzuca, "Rentier Populism," 109.

¹⁹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁹¹ Kaufman, "Generator of Conflict," 95.

the introduction that Bolivia under Morales faces the challenges of whether “plurinationalism can reconcile both indigenous rights and strong state sovereignty, while avoiding new exclusions (and violence) associated with territorializing modes of ethnocultural differences and with hypernationalist states.”¹⁹² It appears clear today that plurinationalism has failed in this regard, and in creating greater national cohesion.

¹⁹² Gustafson, “Manipulating Cartographies,” 991–992.

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